

THE PREACHER A STRANGLER?

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Apprehended in His Shanty,
Whither the Dead Girl's Body
Had Been Taken.

WAS DRINKING WITH THE GIRL.

Tried to Implicate Two Mysterious
White Men, but Made a Mess
of It—Robbery the Motive.

(Special to The Evening World.)

SOMERSET, N. J., Sept. 15.—The sensation caused by the discovery early yesterday morning of the murdered body of the eighteen-year-old mulatto girl, Annie Beekman, near the woods at the Raritan River bridge, increased today when at noon Jacob Johnson, a colored preacher, was arrested, charged with the crime.

The arrest was made by Policemen Crow, on a warrant issued by Justice of the Peace Sutphin. The necessary affidavits were made by State's Attorney Dungan.

Johnson was found at the door of the little shanty which he calls "home," and in one of the rooms of which the dead body of the murdered girl lay in a plain black coffin. He was at once taken before Justice Sutphin, after hearing all the evidence against him, being held to await the result of the inquest, which will be held before Coroner Brady and a jury Wednesday next.

Robbery the Motive.

Somerset County has not been disturbed in a long time as over this latest murder. It was a most brutal kind, and the only motive, so far as known, was the robbery of \$48 which she was known to have had in her possession.

The girl was here attending the fair on Saturday last, and then told her acquaintances that five months before she had married an old man named Rogers, a basket maker, of Newark. For years before that time she had been employed as a domestic with Calvin Carle, of Neshaun.

On leaving the latter's service he owed her something over \$40, and it was to get this sum that she came here Saturday.

Johnson and his wife are known as great evangelists and have towered, intellectually, above their colored brethren. He is a most intelligent and capable individual, who might be taken for anything but a preacher.

His wife is nearly six feet tall, and strongly built. The shanty which they occupy contains two small rooms. It stands on the brink of a hill overlooking a narrow stream about a quarter of a mile from the Raritan River, and the woods near which the body of the murdered girl was found.

Johnson's Filthy Story.

When she arrived at Somerset, she met Johnson and wanted him to have a drink. He said he did not want it, but she insisted, and he drank. She then took him to Treat's Commercial Hotel, near the depot. The girl had a glass of wine, and he had soda. From Treat's the couple went to Cawley's Hotel, and more drinks were ordered.

Johnson told the police yesterday that he saw two white men visiting at his companion, and that when he left they followed her.

He said he wanted to bring home a half of veal and therefore could go no further with her. The last he saw of her, he said, was walking down Bridge street, with the white men close behind. He gave the time as 10:30 o'clock.

When the girl's body was found yesterday morning the marks of the man's fingers were on the throat and the skin had been scratched with fingernails. Her clothing had been torn into rags, showing the desperate fight the girl had made for her life. The little headed pocketbook containing the money was missing.

A thorough search in the vicinity showed that the woman had been knocked down about fifty yards away and the body dragged feet-foremost to the spot where found. Bits of the woman's clothing were picked up in every direction.

The Preacher Contradicted.

From the first the officials did not believe Johnson's story. Several persons said they saw him as late as 11 o'clock Saturday night with the young girl.

Coroner Brady and State Attorney Dungan investigated further. They found a fragment of evidence for the Central Railroad of New Jersey, who said he saw the woman and Johnson at 12:30 o'clock Sunday morning. He knew the time because he had flagged a train a few moments before. It was the woman's voice that attracted him. He knew Johnson because the latter was carrying a bag on his shoulder and wore overalls and a jumper. That is the dress Johnson was seen in early the night before.

When State's Attorney Dungan got to his office this morning, he held a conference with Coroner Brady and Justice Sutphin. The lawyer then made an affidavit, and the warrant was issued. The Coroner, with a detective and an "Evening World" reporter, were driven to the scene, followed by the other officials. Their arrival was quickly known, and a score or more colored men and women swarmed around.

His Wife Calls for Vengeance.

Johnson's knees trembled when the handcuffs were placed on his wrists, but he said nothing. His sister, who was present, began crying and wringing her hands. The others did likewise, except the man's wife, who called down vengeance upon the white prosecutors.

"My husband is a dominie," she cried. "He would not commit murder for \$40. We took that girl in here as Christians and now this is what we get for it."

All the members of Johnson's family were then questioned separately, and all told different stories as to the time of his arrival home on Saturday night.

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Mrs. Boswick was a Miss McConnell, of California. She was married to Boswick Oct. 12, 1886, after a courtship of four weeks.

Mrs. Boswick alleges that her husband treated her cruelly, frequently swearing at her and acting in an unbecomingly manner, that on one occasion he was brutally drunk and that he deserted her in September of last year.

Boswick admits he was drunk, but urges in extenuation that his quarrels with his wife were due to her conduct. He says that in the year 1896, when he had only four months' acquaintance with his wife, she was a prostitute, and that he had to pay for her services.

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